

LESSON 12: STATIONARY MOVEMENTS WITH THE M-1903 RIFLE



*balance
barrel
bolt
port arms
sight
sling
sling swivel
stacking swivel*

PURPOSE

This lesson introduces the procedures for executing the manual of arms with the M-1903 rifles. Specifically, it explains the correct response to the following commands for both of them: order arms and rest, present and **port arms**, inspection arms, right and left shoulder arms, **sling** and unsling arms, and stack and take arms.

INTRODUCTION

Executing drill with arms uses and builds upon the same basic skills you learned in drill without arms. These drills and movements with the M-1903 rifles are important to master because you will be able to apply them in ceremonies, reviews, and drill competitions. Correct execution of them, combined with a lot of pride and practice on your part, can lead to a precision drill team.

DRILL TIPS

- At the halt, your leader initiates all movements from order arms, which is the position at attention.
- Execute all precision movements in the cadence of quick time.
- The command port arms must be given prior to the command for double time.
- Execute facings, alignments, and short distance marching movements from order arms. When the leader commands these movements while you are at order arms, automatically raise your rifle about one inch off the ground on the command of execution. When you complete them, automatically return the weapon to order arms.
- Execute facing movements at order arms only. When you execute facings to establish the direction of march, do so before the command for the manual of arms. After you complete a marching movement, the leader commands order arms prior to the command for the facing movement.
- Use the graphic of the M1 as a guide for the location of rifle parts.

ORDER ARMS AND REST

ORDER ARMS

Order arms is the position of attention with the rifle. You assume it on the command of execution “*attention*” from any of the rest positions and from the commands “*fall in*” or “*order, arms*,” except from inspection or sling arms.



Figure 1

At order arms, place the **butt** of the rifle on the ground, with the toe of the butt on line with the toe of your right shoe and touching it (see *Figure 1*). Keep the rear **sight** to the rear. Secure the weapon with your right hand in a “U” formed by your fingers (extended and jointed) and thumb. Hold the rifle by the **hand guard** just above the **lower band**. Keep your right hand and arm behind the rifle so that your thumb is along the seam of your trousers (see Lesson 4.)

REST POSITIONS WITH THE M-1903

Your leaders command the rest positions with the rifle and you execute them much the same as individual drill, with the following additions:

- On the command “*parade, rest,*” grasp the hand guard below the upper band and thrust the **muzzle** forward, keeping your right arm straight (see *Figure 2*).
- Execute stand at ease in the same manner as parade rest with the rifle, except turn your head and eyes toward the unit leader.
- On the commands of “*at ease*” or “*rest,*” keep the butt of the rifle in place.

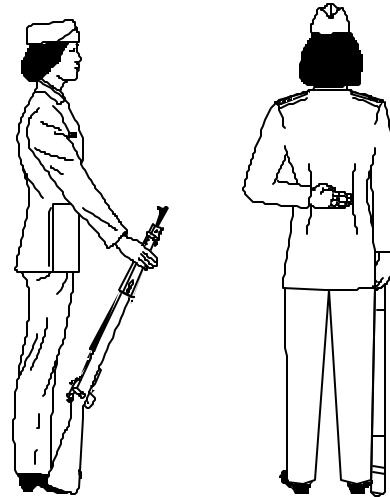


Figure 2

PORT AND PRESENT ARMS

PORT ARMS

Port arms from order arms is a two-count movement (see *Figure 3*). The command is “*port, arms.*” On the command of execution, grasp the hand guard of the weapon with your right hand and raise the weapon diagonally across your body. With the left hand, grasp the **balance** so that the rifle is approximately four inches from your belt. Hold your right elbow down without strain. On the second count, grasp the rifle again with the right hand at the small of the **stock**. Hold the rifle diagonally across your body with your right forearm horizontal and your elbows at your sides.

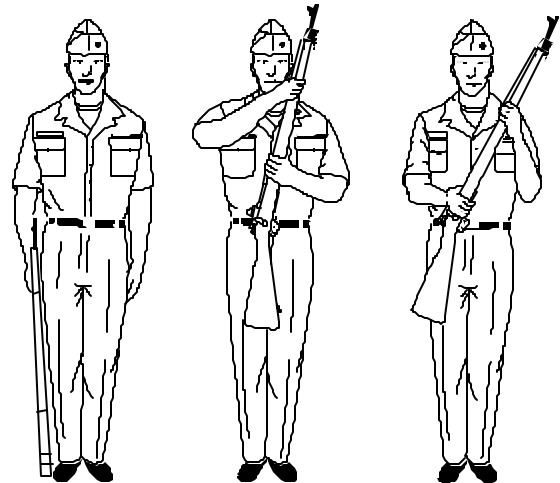


Figure 3

Execute order arms from port arms in three counts (see Figure 4). The command is “*order, arms.*” On the command of execution, move your right hand up and across your body and grasp the hand guard firmly just above the lower band, without moving the weapon. On the second count, release the hand guard with your left hand and lower the rifle to your right side until it is approximately one inch from the ground. Guide the weapon to your side by placing the left hand at the **upper band**, fingers and thumb extended and joined, palm to the rear. On the third count, cut the left hand sharply to your side and lower the rifle gently to the ground, resuming the position of order arms.

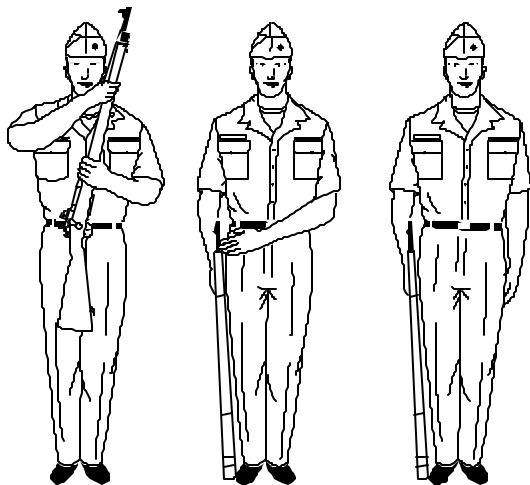


Figure 4

PRESENT ARMS

Present arms from order arms is a three-count movement. The command is “*present, arms.*” On the command of execution, execute both movements of port arms. On the third count, twist the weapon with the right hand and move the weapon to a vertical position approximately four inches in front of and centered on your body. Lower the weapon until the left forearm is horizontal, keeping your elbows at your sides — see the left side of Figure 5.

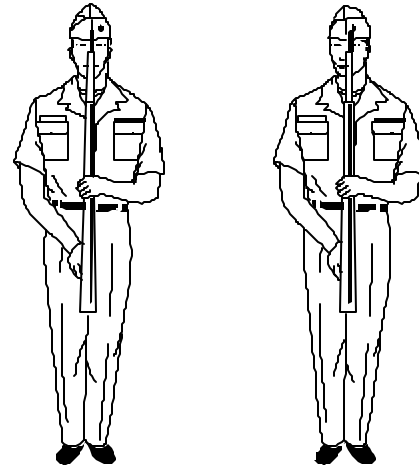


Figure 5

Order arms from present arms is a four-count movement. The command is “*order, arms.*” On the command of execution, return the weapon to port arms. Counts two, three and four are the same as for port arms.

You may also assume port arms on the way to or from present arms from right or left shoulder arms. Present arms from or to port arms is a one-count movement.

When rendering reports or courtesy to an individual from order arms, execute present arms as mentioned above, except turn your head and eyes toward the individual addressed (see the right side of Figure 5). Execute order arms automatically upon acknowledgment of the salute.

When rendering courtesy to an individual while marching with the weapon at right shoulder arms, left shoulder arms, or port arms, and not in formation, execute present arms and continue marching. Upon acknowledgment of the salute, automatically return to the original position.

INSPECTION ARMS

Inspection arms from order arms is a three-count movement (see Figure 6). The command is “*inspection, arms.*” On the command of execution, execute port arms in two counts. On

count three, release the small of the stock with your right hand and move the right hand forward, grasping the **bolt handle** with your thumb and forefinger. Turn the bolt handle up, draw the **bolt** back to the rear, and glance into the **chamber**. Raise your head and eyes back to the front. Continue to hold the bolt handle with your right hand.

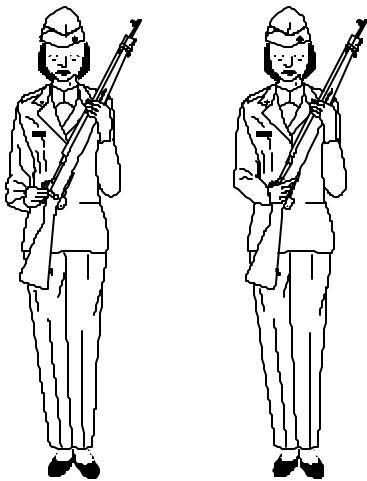


Figure 6

The only command your leader may give from inspection arms is port arms. On the command “*port*,” push the bolt forward, turn the bolt handle down, and grasp the rifle at the small of the stock, placing the index finger of the right hand on the **trigger guard**. On the command “*arms*,” pull the trigger and resume port arms.

RIGHT (LEFT) SHOULDER ARMS

RIGHT SHOULDER ARMS

Right shoulder arms from order arms is a four-count movement (see Figure 7). On the command of execution, execute the same movements as for the first count of port arms from order arms. On the second count, release your right hand and grasp the heel of the butt of the rifle between your first two fingers, with your thumb and index finger touching. On the third count, twist the rifle with your right hand and place it on your right shoulder, not changing the grasp of your right hand.

At the same time, move your left hand to the small of the stock and guide the rifle to your shoulder. Keep your fingers and thumb extended and joined, with your palm turned toward your body. The first joint of your left forefinger should touch the rear of the **cocking piece**. Keep your wrist straight and your left elbow down. On the fourth count, move your left hand back to your side as in the position of attention. Keep your right forearm horizontal with your right upper arm against your side and on line with your back.

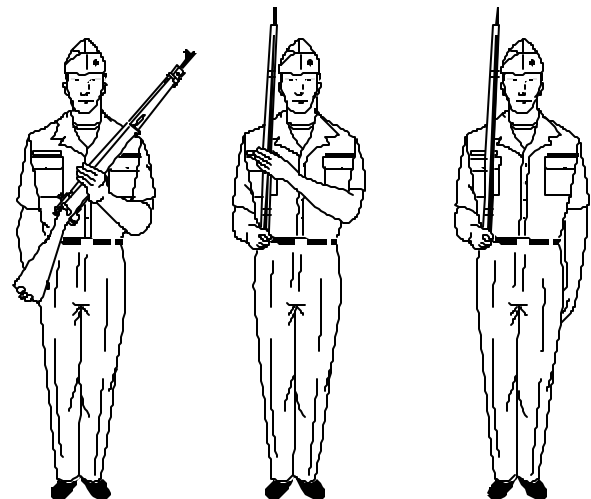
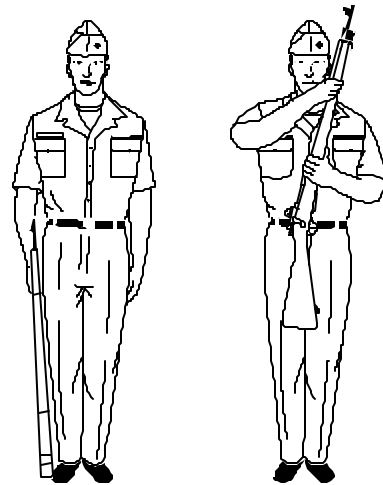


Figure 7

Order arms from right shoulder arms is a four-count movement. On the command of execution, press the butt down quickly and guide the

rifle diagonally across your body. At the same time, twist the rifle to keep the sights up. Grasp the rifle at the balance with your left hand while retaining the grasp of your right hand at the butt. On the second count, release your right hand, move it up and across your body and grasp the hand guard just above the lower band. The third and fourth counts are the same as the second and third counts from port arms to order arms.

LEFT SHOULDER ARMS

Left shoulder arms from order arms is a four-count movement (see Figure 8). On the command of execution, execute port arms in two counts. On the third count, release the grasp of your left hand and place the weapon on your left shoulder with your right hand, keeping your right elbow down. At the same time, grasp the butt with your left hand in the same manner as for right shoulder arms. On the fourth count, lower your right hand smartly to your side to the position of attention.

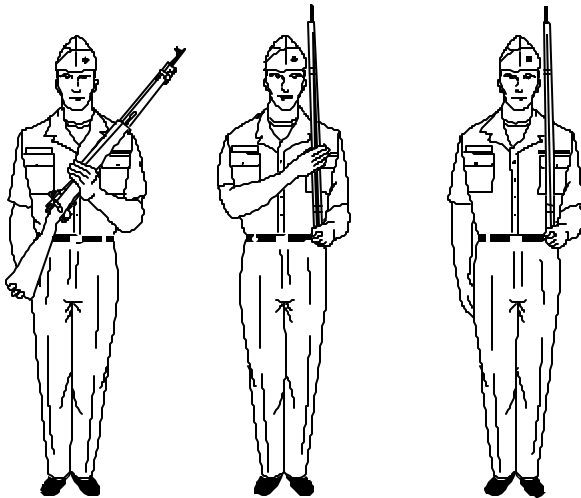


Figure 8

Order arms from left shoulder arms is a five-count movement. On the command of execution, move your right hand up and across your body and grasp the small of the stock, keeping your right elbow down. On the second count, release your left hand and carry the rifle diagonally across your body with your right hand. At the same time,

grasp the rifle at the balance with your left hand, resuming port arms. Counts three to five are the same as order arms from port arms.

CHANGING POSITIONS

Port arms to right shoulder arms is a three-count movement. The command is “*right shoulder, arms.*” On the command of execution, slide the right hand to the right and grasp the butt. Counts two and three are the same as counts three and four from order arms. When marching, the leader gives the command as the right foot strikes the ground.

Port arms to left shoulder arms is a two-count movement. The command is “*left shoulder, arms.*” On the command of execution, execute left shoulder arms in the same manner as counts three and four from order arms. When marching, the leader gives the command as the left foot strikes the ground.

Right shoulder arms to left shoulder arms is a four-count movement. The command is “*left shoulder, arms.*” On the command of execution, execute the first count the same as in order arms. On count two, release the butt of the weapon with the right hand and grasp the small of the stock as in port arms. Counts three and four are the same as from port arms. When marching, give the command as the left foot strikes the ground.

Left shoulder arms to right shoulder arms is a five-count movement. The command is “*right shoulder, arms.*” On the command of execution, execute port arms in two counts. Counts three, four, and five are the same as from port arms. When marching, the leader gives the command as the right foot strikes the ground.

You execute present arms from right shoulder arms or left shoulder arms while in formation from the halt only. On the command of execution, assume port arms from either shoulder,

then execute present arms in one count from port arms.

To resume right (left) shoulder arms from present arms, on the command of execution, execute port arms in one count and then execute the counts as prescribed from port arms.

DID YOU KNOW?

Experienced cadets should be able to execute the 15-count manual of arms in unison: from order, to right shoulder, to left shoulder, to present, to order arms. The command is *“fifteen count manual, arms.”*

SLING AND UNSLING ARMS

Performing drill with a rifle takes practice and coordination. Many of the positions and movements you just learned with the sling of your M-1903 rifle can be done with the sling loose. Knowing how to drill with your rifle when the sling is loose is equally important in being a sharp drill unit.

SLING ARMS

From the order arms position with the rifle slings tight, the command for sling arms is *“sling, arms.”* On the command of execution, raise the weapon vertically and place the rifle butt on your right hip. Cradle the weapon with your right arm, and with both hands loosen the **keeper** and adjust the sling. After the sling is adjusted, sling the weapon on your right shoulder in the most convenient manner. Assume the position of attention by grasping the sling with your right hand, and by keeping your right forearm horizontal and the weapon vertical. If the sling is already loose, sling the weapon in the most convenient manner. (See Figure 9.)

DRILL TIPS

- You may execute all individual or unit drill movements, except stack arms, while at sling arms.
- Remain at sling arms during all rest movements.
- You execute stack arms with the slings loose from order arms only.
- When in formation at sling arms, execute the hand salute on the command *“present, arms.”*
- When acting as a platoon leader or platoon sergeant, carry your weapon at sling arms during all drills and ceremonies. This also applies to acting squad leaders when their squads drill as separate units.
- When all members of a unit are carrying their weapons at sling arms, only the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants execute present arms. They do not execute unsling arms.

UNSLING ARMS

To return the weapon to the order arms position, the command is *“unsling, arms.”* On the command of execution, reach across the body with the left hand and grasp the sling at the shoulder. Unsling the weapon in the most convenient manner and assume order arms.



Figure 9

If the leader desires the sling to be tightened, he/she commands “*adjust, slings.*” On the command of execution, unsling and cradle the weapon, adjust the sling, and automatically assume the order arms position. If you are already at order arms with a loose sling when the leader commands adjust slings, immediately cradle the rifle, adjust the sling, and return to order arms.

Saluting While at Sling Arms

To salute while at sling arms, the command is “*present, arms.*” On the command of execution, reach across your body with your left hand and grasp the sling just above the right hand. Release your right hand and execute the hand salute (see Figure 10).

To end the hand salute, the leader commands “*order, arms.*” On the command of execution, lower your right hand smartly to your side and grasp the sling at the original position. After grasping the sling with your right hand, release it with your left hand, returning it smartly to your left side as in the position of attention.

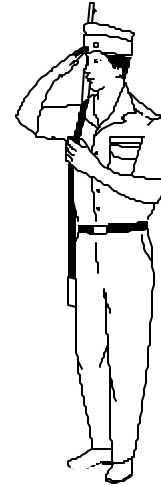


Figure 10

DID YOU KNOW?

When rendering reports or courtesy to an individual while at sling arms, use the same rules that apply for the hand salute in stationary drill.

Executing Port Arms from Sling Arms

The command for this movement is “*port, arms.*” On the command of execution, reach across the body with your left hand and grasp the sling at the shoulder. Lift the weapon by the sling, swing it to the front of your body, and grasp the small of the stock with your right hand. Release the sling and grasp the weapon at the balance with your left hand, keeping your elbows at your sides with the right forearm horizontal (see Figure 11).

Resume sling arms on the command of “*sling, arms.*” On the command of execution, grasp the sling near the upper **sling swivel** with your left hand. Release the right hand and swing the weapon back onto your shoulder by inserting the right arm through the sling, immediately resuming the position of sling arms.

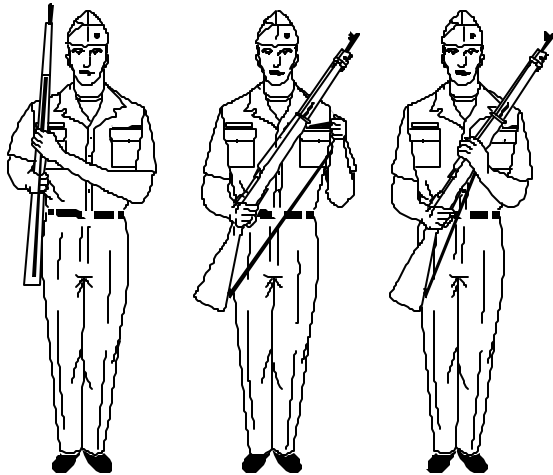


Figure 11

Executing Inspection Arms from Sling Arms

The command for this movement is “*inspection, arms.*” On the command of execution, first execute port arms (in the same manner as you did with the sling tight); then, execute count three in the same manner as inspection arms from order arms (see Figure 12).

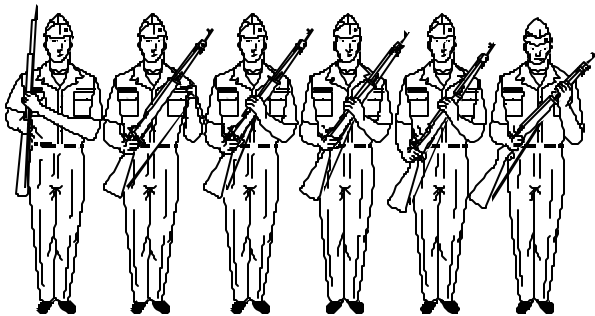


Figure 12

To resume sling arms, use the same procedures as described above for port arms.

STACK AND TAKE ARMS

STACK ARMS

Execute “*stack, arms*” from order arms only. You execute this movement while at normal

interval in a squad line or column formation. The leader designates the stackpersons by numbers (2-5-8-11) when in a line formation and by squads (second or third) when in a column formation.

On the command of execution, the cadet on the left of the stackperson grasps the rifle at the lower portion of the front hand guard. The cadet on the left then passes it in a vertical position to the right front (about 30 degrees) to the stackperson who grasps it with the left hand at the upper portion of the front hand guard (see Figure 13).

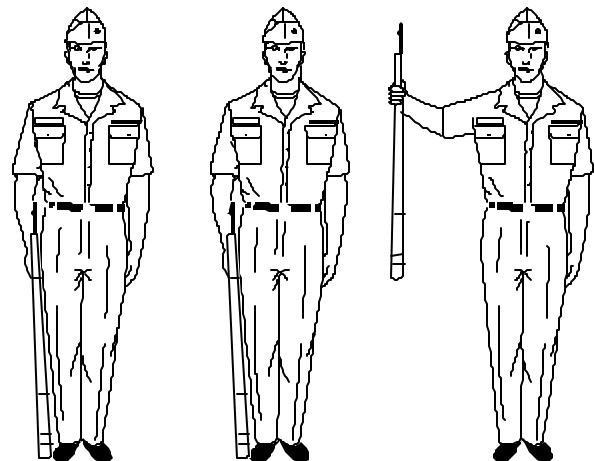
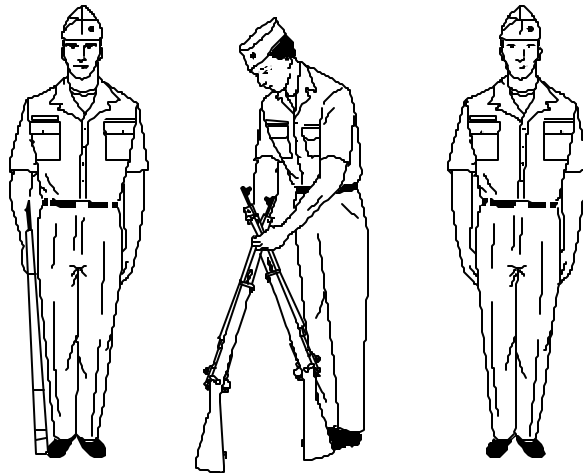
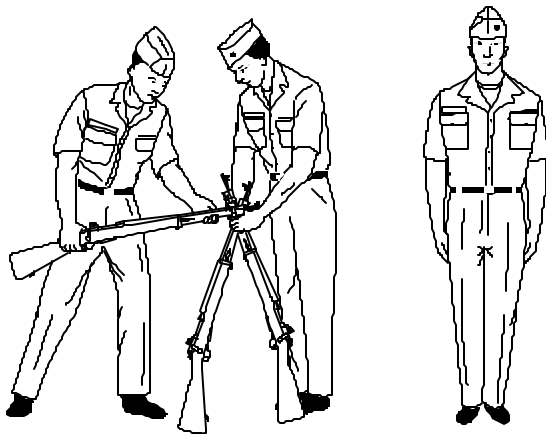


Figure 13

The stackperson places the heel of the rifle butt between his/her feet with the **barrel** to the front, muzzle outward, and raises the **stacking swivel** with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand. That person then swings the butt of his/her rifle two feet in front and six inches to the right of the right of his/her right toe. At the same time, the stackperson shifts the right hand to the stacking swivel of the rifle and engages it with that of the left rifle. The stackperson's rifle is on the right. (See Figure 14.)

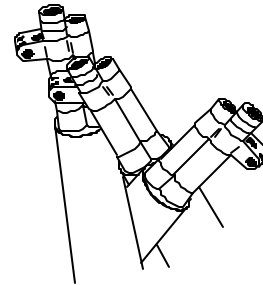
*Figure 14*

The cadet on the right of the stackperson steps to the left with his/her left foot, keeping the right foot in place. At the same time, that cadet bends to the left front, grasps his/her weapon with the left hand at the front hand guard, and places the right hand at the small of the stock. He/she then slides the left hand up to move the stacking swivel, engaging it with the free hook on the swivel of the stackperson's rifle (see Figure 15).

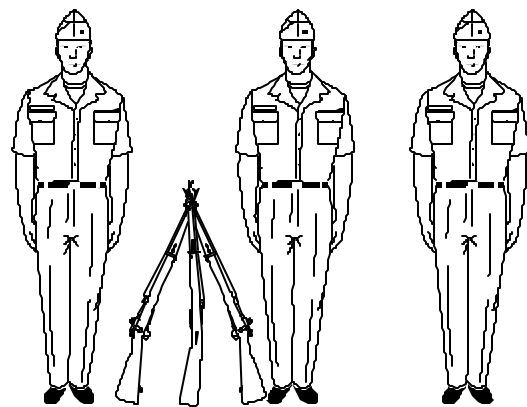
*Figure 15*

The cadet on the right side of the stackperson then rotates the rifle outward so that the

barrel rests in the angle formed by the other two rifles and above the bayonet stud on the left rifle (see Figure 16).

*Figure 16*

That same cadet then pulls the rifle butt inward until the stack is tight and the butt of the rifle is in line with the butt of the rifle between the stackperson's feet. He/she then lowers the butt to the ground and resumes the position of attention (see Figure 17).

*Figure 17*

Cadets with other rifles pass them to the nearest stack on their right. When passing extra rifles to the stack, grasp the front hand guard with your right hand and while holding the rifle vertical, fully extend your arm to your right front. When the cadet on your right has grasped the rifle at the balance with his/her left hand, release your right hand and resume the position of attention.

When you have received a rifle from the cadet on the left, keep it vertical and move it in front of you, with your left hand at the balance. Grasp the front hand guard with your right hand as described above. If you are the stackperson, place the rifle on the stack, trigger guard outward, at a sufficient angle from the vertical to keep it in place. If the second squad is the stack squad, extra rifles are passed to the left.

TAKE ARMS

To take arms, the command is “take, arms.” On the command of execution, the stackperson passes each extra rifle toward its bearer. (**Note:** Each person holds the rifles passed in the same manner described for passing them to the stack — left hand at the balance followed by right hand at the front hand guard). When you receive your weapon, resume the position of order arms by guiding and steadying the weapon with your left hand as in the next to last count of order arms.

After the extra rifles have been passed, the stackperson grasps his/her rifle and the rifle of the cadet on his/her left. The cadet on the right of the stackperson steps to the left as in stacking, secures his/her rifle and resumes the position of order arms.

The stackperson then disengages the two remaining rifles, grasps the left rifle at the lower part of the front hand guard, and passes it to the left front. The cadet to the left grasps the rifle at the front hand guard with his/her right hand and lowers it to the ground, resuming order arms. The stackperson resumes order arms after the cadet on the left has received his/her rifle.

CONCLUSION

This lesson covered the procedures for executing the manual of arms with the M-1903 rifle while at sling arms and when carrying it with the sling tight. Precise drill movements with a weapon require a lot of practice and hard work,

but the outcome may be rewarding for you and your cadet battalion: winning local, state, and/or national drill competitions. Take a moment to look at a video of the national drill competitions held at Daytona Beach, a news video of the Old Guard as members from that unit guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, or the opening of the movie *A Few Good Men* to see firsthand examples of just how good precision drill can be.

* * *